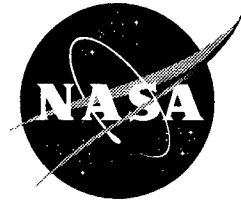


Langley Research Center
100 NASA Road
Hampton, VA 23681-2199



Reply to Attn. of:

140

January 7, 2002

TO: Distribution

FROM: 140/Occupational Health Officer

SUBJECT: Health & Safety Alert: Proper Disposal of Needles & Syringes

Needles and syringes are used for both medical and work-related purposes at the Center. However, there have been recent concerns about the proper disposal of these sharp objects.

Needles and syringes should never be placed in a trashcan for disposal. Needles frequently puncture the trash bags, creating the potential for injury. Recently, a custodial worker received a needle puncture while emptying the trash. Such incidents can be avoided if those using the items follow appropriate disposal procedures.

Biohazard disposal containers or "sharps boxes" are the proper mechanism for disposing of needles and syringes. Therefore, offices purchasing needles and syringes for official use must also purchase biohazard disposal containers. Those individuals using needles and syringes for medical reasons should also have a proper "sharps box" for disposal purposes.

If you do not have an appropriate disposal mechanism, used needles or syringes may be brought to the Clinic (Building 1149) and placed in their biohazard disposal containers. A puncture-proof and sealable container such as a coffee can or a glass jar with a lid should be used for storage until these items are placed in the disposal containers in the Clinic. Regardless of type, the storage container should be clearly labeled "Sharp Objects: Biohazard."

Again, syringes and needles should never be placed in the trash. This Health and Safety Alert is meant to reduce the occurrence of illnesses and injuries from needle punctures.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Clinic at extension 43193.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen A. Koch".

Karen A. Koch
Occupational Health Officer

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SDL 027 (LaRC Civil Servants)
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